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THE RAGTIMER

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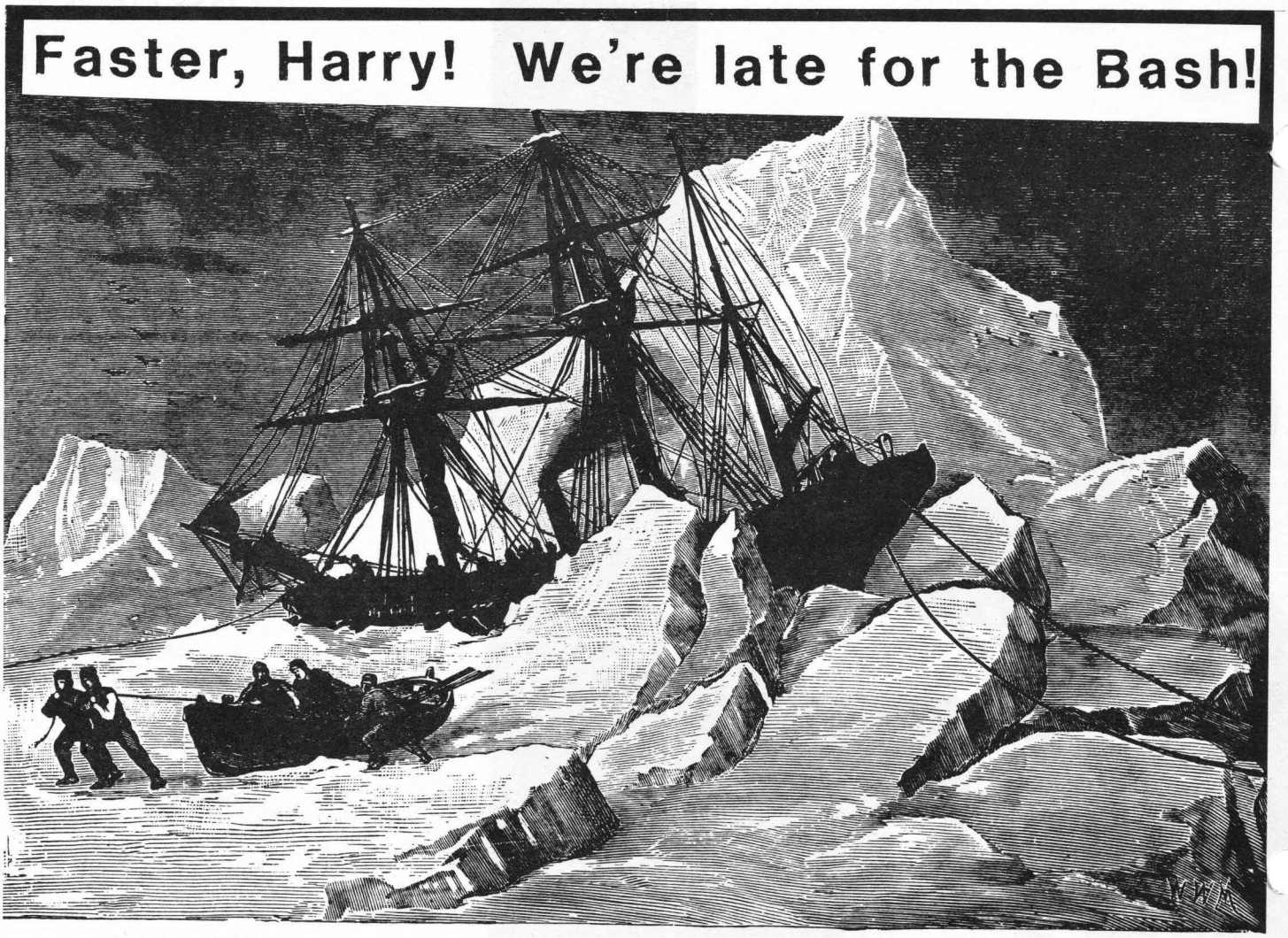

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MORE TO COME -- CHECK WITH ME!

BILL MCCROSTIE

NOTE: The Society music reprint service will return next issue

RAGTIME...
UNDER YOUR HAT

FOUNDED 1962
INCORPORATED 1970

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY
INCORPORATED

is a non-profit corporation having the following objects;

To preserve classical ragtime music and to pursue such other activities as shall serve to maintain and develop interest in classical ragtime music and music related thereto.

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As we approach this year's Bash, it's worth looking at the far-flung group that our Ragtime Society represents.

At the same time that you are reading this page, a ragtimer may be doing the same thing in Australia -- or Crete, Denmark, England, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland or West Germany.

Add to that members in 37 U.S. states and coast to coast in Canada . Our membership isn't large, but we can almost say that the sun never sets on the Ragtime Society.

Speaking of the Bash, we hope that performers are thinking ahead to what they'll play in the formal program. We've had some gentle hints that the content has sometimes strayed outside ragtime at recent Bashes. (The same boundaries don't apply, of course, to the informal sessions on Friday night and Sunday)

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sedalia!

Catherine Wilson

at the Scott Joplin Ragtime Festival

Author Catherine Wilson
with Max Morath at Sedalia

This past June I had a wonderful opportunity to broaden my ragtime horizons. After hearing a tape of some of my performances, Dick Zimmerman telephoned and invited me to perform in Sedalia, Missouri, for the Scott Joplin Ragtime Festival.

The June 8-10 weekend was a very exciting event-- very well organized, and packed with a roster of impressive performers and entertainers.

The performances in a tent on the site of the original Maple Leaf Club, were very enthusiastically received by the Sedalia audiences, and all performers were presented with a certificate thanking them for their participation.

It was marvellous to meet the other performers, to hear them play, and to talk to them about their goals. Fortunately, I was able to interview most of the entertainers, and some of the people who were instrumental in putting the festival together, and making it such a success. That is really the purpose of this article: to share the thoughts and feelings expressed to me by these folks while I was in Sedalia.

It is only fitting to begin with Dick Zimmerman, producer of the entire event as well as fellow performer. Dick is no stranger to ragtime enthusiasts, but most probably don't realize just how multi-dimensional this man actually is. Along with his musical interests, he has been actively involved with magic throughout his life. In 1955, Dick entered Stanford University in Engineering whle still pursuing his ragtime and magic interests. This was followed by two years in the navy in the civil engineer corps in San Francisco Bay. Back in Stanford, he received a Master's degree in Structural Engineering, and he thereafter spent 12 years as supervisor of preliminary game design for Mattel Toy Makers in Los Angeles. In 1967, Dick established the Maple Leaf Club so that ragtimers and ragtime fans could get together and listen to ragtime regularly. The newsletter, "The Rag Times" is starting its 18th year with subscribers from all over the world.

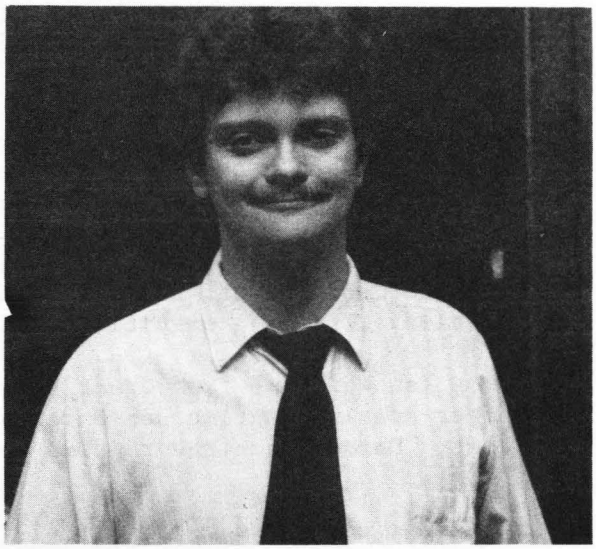
Dick feels that he is a pioneer in creating theatrical ragtime productions featuring a number of ragtime artists (he says he received his inspiration for this from Max Morath). He is active producing ragtime concerts in Los Angeles, as well as recording and working with various fellow artists, including Ian Whitcomb and Ann Fennessy, in addition to helping fellow ragtime greats, including the late Eubie Blake.

His performances at this year's festival were terrific, and with his positive outlook and his creative ideas and energy, I am sure he will continue to do a lot for ragtime. He says: "The key is not to under-sell it, and to always believe in the music."

Dick's right-hand man in making this year's festival happen was Lorell Laboube, the 1984 President of the Scott Joplin committee. Lorell is hopeful that it will become an annual event -- "an occasion for people from all over to participate, and hopefully a tourist event that will attract listeners from everywhere".

It was very reassuring having Lorell at the helm. He kept everything under control, and single-handedly headed off many potential crises. Should Lorell be off pursuing other career aspirations during the 1985 festival, one can only hope that his successor will be as efficient and as good-natured.

Working along with Lorell was this year's secretary of the Scott Joplin Committee, Debbie Mitchell. A hard-working girl with a bright personality, Debbie is very enthusiastic about working on the committee next year. She has some great ideas for improvement, including finding a better piano for the Liberty Centre, where the Sunday Strawberry brunch was held, and achieving a wider media base for the festival. She ultimately hopes to tie the event into the St. Louis Festival which follows the Sedalia festival, perhaps even scheduling a train to transport performers between them.



LORELL LABOUBE
'Let's make it an annual event!'

One of the achievements carried on by this year's committee was to arrange for hosts and hostesses to chauffeur the performers around Sedalia. My thanks to Virginia Hoskins, a sweet lady who got me to the right places at the right times.

Continued on next page

EDITOR: In our March/April, 1983, issue, Catherine Wilson described what it was like to perform at the first Kansas City Eats Festival with such other ragtime performers as Ragtime Bob Darch. We're delighted that her unique reporting talents (almost like a letter home) are spotlighting Sedalia's Joplin Festival in this issue.

Talking with other performers

Headlining this year's festival was the legendary Max Morath. He treated the Sedalia audiences to a complete show on both Friday and Saturday evenings, including solos and performances with his quartet, the members of which included Jim McElwaine on clarinet and alto saxaphone, Howard Alden on tenor banjo and guitar, and Terry Kippenberger on bass.

These superb musicians displayed technically brilliant and musically sensitive interpretations with entertaining and informative commentary provided by Max. Always tasteful and imaginative, the arrangements for the ensemble were written by Max himself. He explained that he chose this specific instrumentation because "there were a number of novelty rags which were written for tenor banjo, which gives it some roots in the ragtime genre. Aside for that, however, this combination has a variety of melodic and rhythmic potentials."

Although this was the quartet's first appearance in Sedalia, Max personally headed the festival in 1983. "I am proud and honoured to do this," he told me, "for it is always a pleasure to come to Missouri where it all happened."

His next big project is his show "Pop Goes the Music" (American Popular Music and How It Got That Way!). This is mostly a ragtime show spanning music from 1900 to the 1950's on American Popular Music, for which he will be using a quintet.

The Friday evening concert, with Max Morath hosting, was launched by Trebor Tichenor and the St. Louis Ragtimers. It's wonderful when the audience is able to become completely wrapped up with the music. This usually happens when the musicians themselves are immersed in what they are doing, and enjoying it. The energy and involvement is transmitted to the audience, creating much excitement and high spirits. Trebor Tichenor and the St. Louis Ragtimers, a six-piece ensemble, did this in Sedalia. It was a magnificent way to start off a delightful evening.

Ian Whitcomb from Great Britain says he fell in love with ragtime after hearing Ragtime Bob Darch perform the "Maple Leaf Rag". He says that, "Darch began the ragtime revival almost single-handedly."

Ian's performances were accompanied by Dick Zimmerman on the piano. His dry wit and confident singing style provided a wonderful contrast -- funny and highly entertaining.

Besides his interest in ragtime, popular songs and rock'n'roll, Ian is also a fine historian. To date he has several recordings to his credit, as well as five books, the most recent being "Rock Odessey" which has been highly praised by the New York Times.

Ian Whitcomb and the author

Both participants and listeners were reminded why Tex Wyndham from Mendenhall, Pennsylvania, is so popular at ragtime gatherings across the U.S. (and the Ragtime Bash!) Tex, like Ian Whitcomb, was inspired in his early days by Joe "Fingers" Carr. In addition to his busy performing schedule, he also write record reviews for six different publications, leads the Red Lion Jazz Band at home, among other groups, and has 18 different recordings to his credit.

Working along with Tex was violinist David Reffkin, a graduate of the New England Conservatory. As well as collecting orchestrations and giving concerts, David has had his own radio program, "The Ragtime Machine", in San Francisco since July, 1981. The weekly one-hour program features ragtime recordings and tapes, as well as interviews with various ragtime composers and performers. In fact, David managed to interview a number of the performers in Sedalia this year for the KUSF-FM network, including yours truly. (If ever in San Francisco, it would be worth your while to look him up. He currently has a trio performing at the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco, and is also involved in a number of other ensembles)

Another performer who caught everyone's attention was Molly Kaufman from Denver, Colorado. As well as her bold performance of Eubie Blake's "Charleston Rag", she delighted everyone with her blues stylings which she wailed out with abandon. She later appeared at that same Friday evening concert with Dick Zimmerman performing wild and crazy ragtime duets -- a rare feat!

Molly was the first woman in the 1960's to play in a Dixieland band, later branching out into ragtime, blues and singing. She is working on her first album as well as working steadily throughout Colorado. Of herself, Molly says: "I am more of an entertainer than a musician. I perform to communicate to audiences and to connect up with people."

Also from Denver was pianist Bryan Finkelstein. An excellent pianist, Brian was involved in the Saturday afternoon concert entitled "Cavalcade of Ragtime". It was a treat for eveyone to hear this fine musician.

At the moment, he is jobbing throughout the U.S., and he can be heard frequently at the Heritage Hotel in Denver, Colorado. Bryan said that he felt very comfortable in Sedalia. "I love the great ragtime crowds here. It is wonderful for meeting other players and for making contacts with fellow ragtime enthusiasts."

Leading off the Saturday evening concert was the Spokane Falls Brass Band, along with singer Ann Fennessy. The group consists of Laurence Jess and Christopher Cook, trumpets; Verne Windham and Roger Logan, French horns; Andrew S. Owens, slide trombone. For me, they were a definite highlight -- beautiful playing along with tasteful arrangements. Ann Fennessy was an added colourful bonus with her gorgeous voice and fun style.

All members of the brass ensemble are members of the Spokane Symphony. They formed the brass band in 1981 as part of a government project to revive the original band from 1878.

As a brass quintet, it is a unique ensemble, having two French horns. Verne Windham explained: "We are really an Americana band, branching into twenties' tunes, music of the Civil War era and much much more, along with our ragtime." In the last year, they have commissioned the following ragtime composers: Bill Bolcolm, Bill Albright, Max Morath, Donald Ashwander, Peter Schickele, Gunther Schuler, Dick Hyman, Arthur Franckenpohl, and Andy Owens to write new tunes for their ensemble.

Ann Fennessy is a graduate of the University of Colorado in vocal performance. She is an extremely diversified singer, having done everything from touring with a rock band to ragtime to German leider to new music with a group called the Composer's Conspiracy.

As well as her regular performance engagements, Ann teaches, directs a church choir, and is a mother of two. Ann said: "I would come back to Sedalia anytime. It was a wonderful and appreciative audience."

The Spokane group was a difficult act to follow, but follow them I had to, as I heard the gracious Dick Zimmerman introducing me. For my portion, I had been asked to perform "Gladiolus Rag" by Scott Joplin, "Porto Rico" by Ford Dabney, Joplin's old stand-by "The Entertainer and Eubie Blake's "Chevy Chase". My other contributions to the weekend included two performances at the site of the original Maple Leaf Club, one on Friday afternoon, one on Saturday afternoon, and my performance at the Sunday brunch.

It was a thrill to be a part of this event with such respected artists and entertainers, and to play for such an enthusiastic audience. I too would return anytime.

It was also very heartwarming to know that two of our Ragtime Society directors, Pel Bell-Smith and Betty Miquelon, both of Toronto, were in the audience cheering me on. They have been a tremendous support and help to the Ragtime Society, and to all its members, performers and non-performers alike.

Following me on that eventful Saturday evening was the spectacular Johnny Guarnieri, one of the all-time greats. He dazzled everyone with his performance of tunes from Fats Waller, Irving Berlin and Johnny Guarnieri.

This brilliant artist has worked with and been associated with Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Jimmy Dorsey, Ray Bloch, Lionel Hampton, Louis Armstrong and Frank Sinatra, to name just a few. He has also done movie work with Red Skelton and George Burns-Gracie Allen. Needless to say, he almost brought the house down.

How would YOU like to have Johnny Guarnieri follow you?

Wrapping up the Saturday evening concert was the outstanding performance given by the celebrated group, The Legend Singers. Under the direction of Dr. Kenneth B. Billups, this group was formed in 1940, "to popularize and perpetuate America's legendary black folk music." Over the years, the group has been heard on numerous occasions on national radio and has given personal appearances at the Municipal Opera in St. Louis.

During their performance from Joplin's opera, "Treemonisha", you could hear a pin drop. It was a powerful and moving experience, one not to be forgotten.

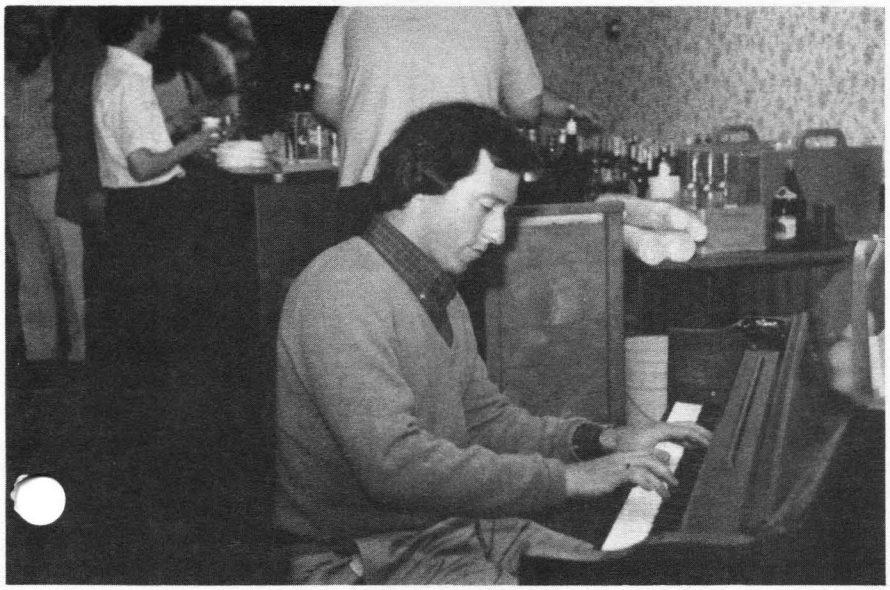
The weekend's activities wound up with a delectable strawberry brunch held at the Liberty Centre on Sunday, June 10. All the performers played once again -- all except those who had to leave directly after the Saturday evening concert.

At this event, I was able to get a few words with two other ragtimers, Yvonne Cloutier and David Thomas Roberts.

Yvonne, a delight to speak with, is very involved with ragtime as a performer and as a writer. She has recorded five volumes of Joplin's music, called "Commemorative Favorites", and she is currently writing a children's book. It is a biography of Joplin which will include a tape of some of his rags that she feels the kids will most enjoy.

In addition to this and her concerts, Yvonne also finds time to teach in the public school system in Superior, Wisconsin, her home. For the Scott Joplin weekend in Sedalia, she entertained the audiences at the site of the original Maple Leaf Club and at the Strawberry brunch.

Another devoted ragtimer is pianist/composer David Thomas Roberts. He originally studied at Florida State University and the University of Southern Mississippi. Regarded by many as the leading contemporary ragtime composer in the U.S., David has written 60 ragtime compositions since 1971, and has made two ragtime recordings. David currently lives in New Orleans and plays ragtime at the World's Fair. We look forward to more of his works.



Bryan Finkelstein,
perhaps recalling the days when Joplin also played in Sedalia bars

Maestro Dick Zimmerman with Catherine and Molly Kaufman

As you may have gathered, it was an incredible weekend, one that will certainly be repeated. In fact, Dick Zimmerman has already launched into plans for the 1985 festival, with hopes of including The Ragtime Society's president, John Arpin, and the Arpin-Wilson Duo.

Thanks again to Dick Zimmerman for all his work and creative genius in producing such a memorable and wonderful festival. Scott Joplin would have been proud.

EDITOR: Catherine Wilson modestly failed to review or interview one fine pianist at the Sedalia festival -- herself. Betty Miquelon makes up for that with this report.

Catherine Wilson, the only Canadian performer at the Scott Joplin Festival in Sedalia, Mo., was a great credit to Toronto and the Ragtime Society.

Looking beautiful in her pretty red gown and big picture hat, she walked across the stage to the microphone and paid great tribute to John Arpin for teaching her ragtime, and to the Ragtime Society for its support. After her fine performance of "Gladiolus Rag", "Porto Rico", "The Entertainer" and "Chevy Chase", she had won the hearts of everyone!

Someone in the audience asked if she was our daughter. Pel and I would have been very proud to have been able to say "yes"!

Catherine with Pel Bell Smith and Betty Miquelon of the Ragtime Society

RAGTIME RUMBLES

BY BILL McCROSTIE
Vice-President
and Managing Director

Great to hear that the HOOSIER, SEDALIA and ST. LOUIS FESTIVALS all were their usual great smashes.

The MOLSON INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL in Toronto was another great June weekend with bands from Scotland, England, France and from all across the U.S.A. as well as the fine local bands. It was not possible to hear them all -- but we tried. Everyone had their favorites, but for me it came when ELI NEWBERGER with BOB PILSBURY on piano did a tuba solo of Eubie's "Memories of You". Fantastic. We are also proud of the fact that DAVE FLOWITT, who also impresses Bash audiences with his stride and Morton renditions, was a featured guest pianist with many of the groups.

The MOLSON JAZZ FESTIVAL, local Toronto edition, was up on the first weekend in August -- another great music feast of Toronto bands.

Incidentally, the RAINBOW GARDENS JAZZ ORCHESTRA, who were a prominent part of the two Toronto festivals (one enthusiastic reviewer called them "time travellers in white tuxedos") also played at the BIX BEIDERBECKE FESTIVAL in Davenport, Iowa, the last week in July. They have also just brought out their first record.

A recent concert at Harbourfront in Toronto brought out a number of ragtimers to take part -- JACK CUFF, MEL COLLIE and MAE KNUDSEN and CURLY FORBES.

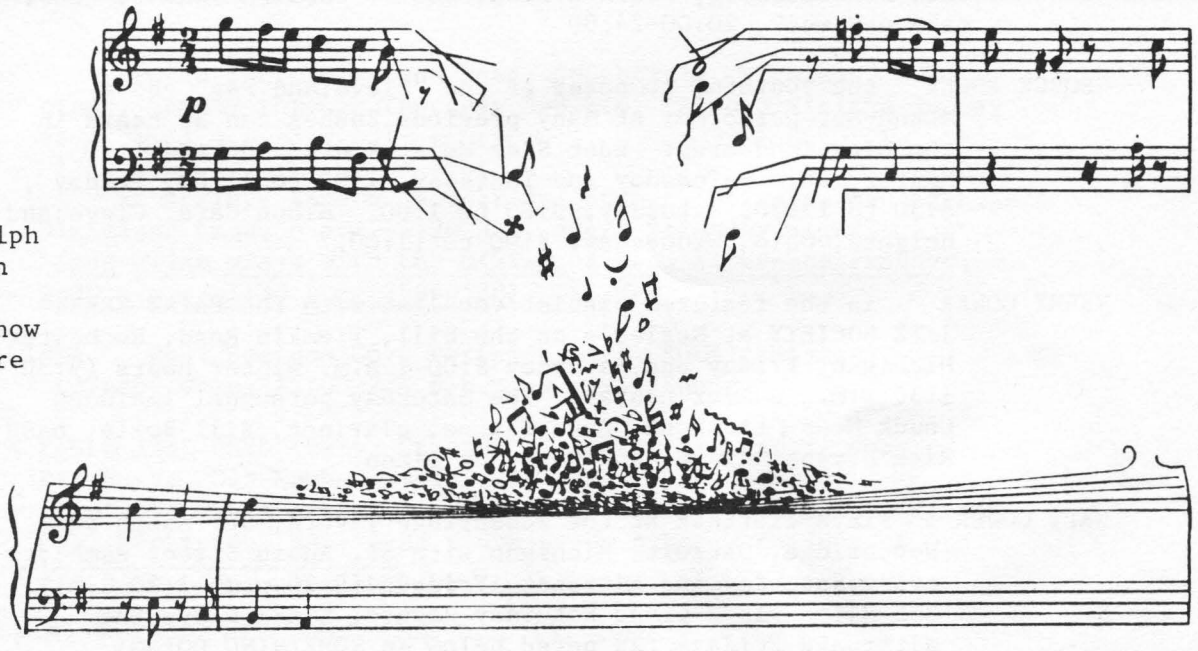
And now -- Oct. 19, 20, 21, the 20th annual Ragtime Bash! It looks like another wonderful weekend, so don't be disappointed. Send in your reservations -- NOW.

A banjo quartet from Toronto which included ragtimer MEL COLLIE attended the FICA convention in Boston recently.

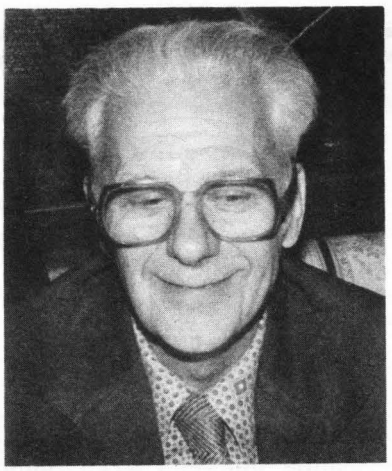
WHO WANTS TO PLAY THIS AT THE BASH?

Society member Ralph Alderton passed on this bit of fun (perhaps this is how pianos sound before he tunes them!)

Bess Fell -- we want to see you sight-read THIS.



SOMETHING DOING



By Elmer Renaud

who reveals that Catherine Wilson has the unique honour of performing as a solo pianist for Queen Elizabeth II at a select gathering in Toronto Oct. 2. Read all about it in what is rapidly becoming the world's finest thumbnail guide to ragtime performers.

JOHN ARPIN Playing at Club 22, the piano bar at Toronto's Windsor Arms Hotel, 5:15 p.m. to 8:15 p.m., Monday through Friday. CONCERTS -- Nov. 25 (with Catherine Wilson), St. Dunstan's, 3152 Danforth Ave., Toronto, 8 p.m. (please note: concert was earlier scheduled Sept. 30); Oct. 5, Dundalk, Ont., 8 p.m.; Oct. 19, Cobourg, Ont., 8 p.m.; Nov. 4, Elliot Lake, Ont., 8 p.m.; Nov. 28, Sarnia Collegiate Institute of Technology, Sarnia, Ont., 8 p.m.

MEL COLLIE A frequent banjo performer at recent Bashes, Mel performs frequently around Toronto, usually at the Jack Russell Pub, 27 Wellesley St. East, Toronto, with his own group, The Entertainers (piano, banjo, drums). The group emphasizes sing-a-long favorites "in an easy-going unpretentious pub atmosphere with lots of audience participation and guest artists popping in."

ROBERT R. (RAGTIME) DARCH -- Hotel Anglais, Humlegardsgaten 23, Stockholm, Sweden, July 30-Sept. 9, 20:00-01:00 daily; Hotel Kramer, Malmo, Sweden, Sept. 10-20, 20:00-01:00; Restaurant Downtown Key Club, Universitetsgaten 26 (30 hours per week, flexible), Oslo, Norway, Sept. 24- Oct. 20; Royal Alexandria Hotel, Heleopolis ,Egypt, Oct. 24-Nov. 12; Peponi Hotel, Lamu Island, Kenya, East Africa, Nov. 14-Dec. 5; Hlyhluwe Holiday Inn, Johannesburg, South Africa, Dec. 7 through Jan. 6, 1985, 5 days per week, 20:00-24:00

GEORGE FOLEY the youthful composer of the "Cleveland Rag" and a stand-out performer at many previous Bashes can be heard in the Cleveland area: East Side Mo's, Routes 306 and I.90 , Mentor, Ohio --Tuesday and Thursday, 7:00 to 11:00, Friday , 8:30 to 12:30, Saturday, 9:00 to 1:00. Elbon Cafe, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, Wednesday, 8:00 to 11:00./

KERRY GOWER is the featured pianist/vocalist with the PAINT CREEK JAZZ SOCIETY at Nealee's on the Hill, Tiemkin Road, Rochester, Michigan, Friday and Saturday 9:00-1 a.m. winter hours (9:30 - 1:30 a.m., summer hours). The Saturday personnel includes Chuck Moss , trombone, Dave Tatroe, clarinet, Bill Bolle, bass, Rick Bryant, drums, and Kerry on piano.

WALT GOWER Plays clarinet at the Woodbridge Tavern, St. Aubin and Woodbridge, Detroit, Michigan with St. Aubin Street Ramblers every Saturday and alternate Fridays (9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m.). Bob Milne plays piano Saturday nights; Linda plays the alternate Fridays (as noted below in SOMETHING DOING)

DAN GRINSTEAD a welcome and impressive newcomer at the '83 Bash, can be heard in the Seattle, Washington, area.

JEAN AND PAUL HULING (Sister Jean, the Ragtime Queen and Laundry Fat) Playing every Saturday, 9 p.m.- 1 a.m., Cleaveland Crate and Trucking Co. Restaurant, Cleveland, Ohio, with Ralph Cruegel's New Eagle Jazz Band.

GLENN JENKS who dazzled listeners at last year's Bash is a must if you're visiting the Maine-New Hampshire area. A sample of his future and most recent dates: Washington Folk Festival, Bretton Woods, N.H., Aug. 18; Common Ground Fair, Windsor, Me., Sept. 21; Mill Yard Restaurant, Manchester, N.H., Sept. 28, 8:30 p.m.

MOLLY KAUFMAN can be seen elsewhere in this issue alongside Catherine Wilson at the Sedalia Festival where they both played. This highly respected Denver ragtimer has hopes of getting to this year's Bash for the first time (great!). Meanwhile, she's playing at the Ramada Renaissance in Denver, Colorado, July 28-Sept. 28

JOHNNY MADDOX Playing at Il Porto Restaurant nightly except Sundays July 2-Sept. 22 and Oct. 22-Dec. 15. (EDITOR: Sorry, we don't have the address or phone number of the Il Porto Restaurant)

MIKE MONTGOMERY Playing at the Dakota Inn Rathskeller, 17324 John R St., Detroit, Mi (near Woodward and McNichols) on Friday nights between 8 p.m. and 1:30 a.m. Mike is there most Friday nights, but call 313-867-9722 to make sure if you're planning a visit. Says Mike: "I don't play many rags -- mostly pop songs and show tunes. People from the audience sing solos; Gary Thompson occasionally comes in and sings rag songs."

BOB MILNE Ramada Inn, Telegraph Road, Southfield, Michigan, solo piano, Monday through Thursday 5-8 p.m. (Also Dixieland Sunday brunch, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.)

Woodbridge Tavern, Woodbridge Street, Detroit, Michigan, Dixieland band, 8 p.m.-1:30 a.m. every Saturday night Linda Milne plays with the Dixieland band alternate Fridays, 9:30 p.m. - 1:30 a.m.(259-0578)

BOB AND LINDA MILNE Real Seafood Co., Portside Mall, Summit Street, Toledo, Ohio, 12:00-2; 5 p.m.-9 p.m., Sunday

NEW BLACK EAGLE JAZZ BAND (Ralph Cruegel, leader. Pianist is Bob Pilsbury; Eli Newberger is tuba player and occasional pianist) Plays every Thursday, 7:30 -11 p.m. at Sticky Wicket Pub, Hopkinton, MA. Also plays every other Wednesday at Jazzboat, Commonwealth Pier, Boston, MA., sailings at 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m., beginning June 13, 1984.

RAINBOW GARDENS JAZZ ORCHESTRA is playing regularly in the Toronto area most weekends but not at a home base spot. To find out where, call leader Ric Giorgi at 653-8496 (416) or Jack Hutton at 481-7011 (416). (The group is booked for a Caribbean cruise out of Tampa, Florida, between Jan. 5-12, 1984. For details, write to Ric Giorgi, 172 Rushton Road, Toronto M6G 3J1) Concert: Trent University, Peterborough, Ont. Nov. 23 (3:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.; 7:30 p.m.-10 p.m.)

RENT PARTY REVELLERS (an all-star touring band that includes Tex Wyndham on cornet) Sept. 14 - The Sticky Wicket Pub, Hopkinton, Massachusetts; Sept. 15 -- Concert for the Connecticut Traditional Jazz Society (location to be announced); Sept. 16 - Jazz brunch at the Sticky Wicket Pub, Hopkinton, Massachusetts; Sept. 17 - The University of New Hampshire, Durham, New Hampshire.

SI RICHARDS Plays Wednesdays 7 p.m. to 12 p.m. and Thursdays 7:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. at Chung's Restaurant, 21080 Lorain Road, Fairview Park, Ohio 44126 (216-333-3070). Or you'll find Si on Friday nights at the Cleveland Yachting Club, 200 Yacht Club Drive, Rocky River, Ohio 44116 (216-333-1155) between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. Si, a perennial favorite at the Bash, shows the influence of his idols: Art Tatum, Fats Waller and Teddy Wilson (who wrote admiring notes for a Si Richards LP)

BOB SEELEY Plays Tuesday to Saturday, 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., at Charley's Crab Restaurant, Highway 175 and Crooks Road, Troy, Michigan (a northern suburb of Detroit). Bob Seeley is in his 12th year at Charley's Crab Restaurant, which won't surprise Bash admirers of his ragtime, stride, boogie and blues styles. (When pressed, he can also play either classical or ballads) To confirm that Bob is playing call 313-546-4337 (home number)

CATHERINE WILSON is playing for Her Royal Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II! Our Catherine will be a featured soloist during a four-hour program Oct. 2nd at Toronto's Harbour Castle Hilton in honour of the Queen's royal visit. (All performers, including Catherine, had to go through an RCMP security check) Playing regularly at the Courtyard Cafe, Windsor Arms Hotel, Monday to Saturday, 7 p.m.-11 p.m., Oct. 22-27; Oct. 29-Nov. 3; Nov. 26-Dec. 1; Dec. 24-29. As noted above, she and John Arpin have a piano duo concert Sunday, Nov. 25th at St. Dunstan's Church in Toronto (Victoria Park and Danforth). DATE CHANGED FROM SEPT. 30th. Catherine Wilson played several times this past summer with her string trio, including Aug. 25th when she and the trio (plus a quintet) headlined the Orillia Festival of Arts.

TEX WYNDHAM appearing with his RED LION JAZZ BAND the first Friday of each month, 9:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m., The Haberdashery, 8th and King Streets, Wilmington, Delaware.

Dear Editor:

Just wanted to thank you for the best-ever edition of The Ragtimer. I am, of course, referring to the last issue saluting Max Morath! Even though I did not attend the concert on April 8, I feel I almost attended through your wonderful article.

As a member of the Bordentown Community Concert Association, I attended Max's concert in March, 1982. Since I had been a devoted fan of Max's for many, many year (although I'm only 38!) I was looking forward to that concert with much excitement and, I must admit, a little trepidation. Was this man as talented as his records sounded? Was he as knowledgeable and charismatic as every article that I had ever read about him said he was? To say "Yes!" to each question would be an understatement.

The concert began at 8 p.m.; my friend and I arrived at 6 p.m. There was Max, setting things up on stage. Well, I walked right up, introduced myself, and instantly adored this wonderful man! We had a great conversation while my friend took lots of photographs and Max graciously signed my albums and books. (I wonder how many other people have their copy of They All Played Ragtime autographed by Max Morath?)

The concert itself was fantastic! I thought I already knew a lot about ragtime, but I learned so much more that evening while Max made "converts" out of the entire audience.

To top off an already perfect evening, Max invited my friend and me as his guests to the party given for him after the concert. This was an informal gathering during which we all got to speak to Max and learn more about him (his background, his association with Eubie Blake, etc.) But, wouldn't you know, Max was just as interested in us as we were in him!

During the evening, Max told me about several women who had written ragtime music. To my delight, shortly afterward, I received in the mail an autographed album of Max's titled: "The Ragtime Women". During the past two and a half years, I have corresponded with Max. I will always treasure the letters I have received from him. And, of course, I won't forget to send him a birthday card on Oct. 1.

I am so glad that you (Jack Hutton) and many others share my admiration for Max Morath. He is, indeed, the finest ragtime entertainer of them all.

Sincerely yours,
(Miss) Phyillis E. Stern,
Edgewater Park, New Jersey.

P.S. I am a math and music
teacher in Burlington Township, N.J.
You can bet that ragtime is part of my Music
Appreciation curriculum. I'm doing my best to
make converts out of some of today's teenagers!

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Compiled by

Charles B. Davis Jr.

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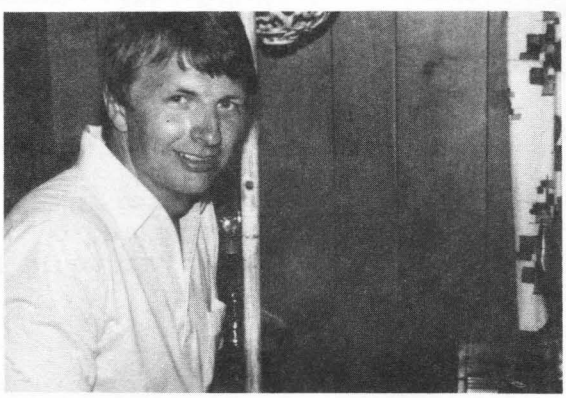
TO BE CONTINUED: If you have just tuned in, the Ragtimer is running in instalment form a ragtime index of hard-to-find compositions, prepared by Charles P. Davis. The Society is interested in learning whether you would like to see the index printed later in booklet form.

A couple of thoughts about a busy summer playing at festivals, ragtimers in unlikely places, some new and not-so-new records, and the oddball problems of this publication's deadline.

First about the festivals. The Rainbow Gardens Jazz Orchestra played at the Toronto International Jazz Festival in late June, which gave us our first opportunity to hear in person the Royal Society Jazz Orchestra from Los Angeles (when we finally met, we discovered that both bands had been told they sounded a bit like the other) and the Hot Antic Jazz Band from France. We thoroughly enjoyed the Royal Society, both musically and as new friends, but we were bowled over by the Hot Antic band which does many of the same Bix and Whiteman numbers that the Rainbow Gardens does. (It takes a bit of adjusting to get used to hearing MEE--SEE-SIPPI-MOOD, although the lyrics, learned from the records, were sung in flawless English) The Hot Antic arrangements are detailed reproductions of some of the early records, requiring split second timing for the breaks and a constant awareness of what comes next, yet we didn't see a note of music in front of anyone. Amazing.

In late July, we were again the only Canadian band invited to the Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Festival in Bix's home town, Davenport, Iowa. To us, the highlight is always the same: hearing the Red Rose Ragtime Band from Chicago, co-led by Mike Schwimmer, washboard and percussion, and Joan Reynolds, one of this continent's best ragtime pianists. The big news this year was that the group has its first record, echoing a number off our Rainbow Gardens record, "Big Boy", but also including numbers you've never heard like "Dusky Stevedore" and "Pekin Rag", a 1904 rag by Joe Jordan. (The Red Rose is the first ragtime/jazz band to record the latter) We'll wait for Tex Wyndham's authoritative review, but I must say that listening to Joan Reynolds is a delight. When I hear her playing effortlessly on top of banjo, tuba and percussion, I'm always struck by the flawless authenticity of what she's doing.

Joan Reynolds: Flawlessly authentic



Moving to another ragtimer, I have to mention Rodney Biensen, who plays a ragtime piano that seems to come right out of the Mississippi folk rag stream. He hasn't been part of the Beiderbecke formal program any year I've been there, but is front and centre at the late night jam session, sometimes playing for hours at a time. Rodney, who leads the Skunk River Jazz Band back in State Center, Iowa, is also a familiar face at the St. Louis Ragtime Festival.

Moving to records, I can't help mentioning one that doesn't fit into the ragtime mould but would probably appeal to many of our members.

MOSE SCARLETT, Stalling for time is not a ragtime record in any sense of the word, but both its music and its namesake may intrigue ragtimers. Mose Scarlett, a recent member of the Ragtime Society but a long-time folk/blues/jazz guitarist on the Toronto scene, made a record a few years ago at the urging of a fellow musician friend, Bruce Cockburn. What intrigues me about the record (it mixes standards like "Stardust", "Don't Worry 'Bout Me", "Stardust", "Melancholy Baby" and "Someday Sweetheart" with Scarlett's own originals) is the way Mose turns both the melody lines and the chords upside down. When I played piano behind him on a couple of impromptu evenings, I found him delaying chord changes for effect -- yet managing to sound right. It's not ragtime, but Mose Scarlett's "ragging" of his tunes fits into the spirit of the form. On top of this, he has a deep, deep bass voice that adds to the unusual trademark of a night with Mose Scarlett. The record sells for $10 (Canadian) plus $2 for postage and handling, and is available through Mose Scarlett, 118-A Eastwood Road, Toronto, Ontario, M4L 2C9.

Finally, I've been meaning to discuss the Ragtimer's deadline for some time in this space. When I took over the editing assignment in early 1981, I made a silent commitment to continue as editor for a minimum of five years. The fifth year begins next January, but I feel badly that other commitments have frequently made it difficult to get issues out as quickly as I'd like. Those commitments include my daytime job which usually extends into two or three nights each week (particularly Friday nights), plus the Rainbow Gardens which averages one night's rehearsal and the weekend gigs. In May, the demands of making a record shot down any free time because of the extra rehearsals required in advance of each recording session. As writing colleagues sometimes remind me with indulgent sarcasm, I had one book virtually finished four years ago and another in the drawing board stage. Both are exactly where they were then because there hasn't been a solid block of time to do the dog work of rewriting and editing. In some months, the calendar literally does not have not one free day to crash into the typing, make-up and editing that must go into each Ragtimer issue. All this isn't meant as a complaint or a plea for understanding, because I thoroughly enjoy the Ragtimer -- particularly the many people I've come to know better through your letters and comments. It is a small attempt, however, at explaining why you occasionally find that I have put two issues together.

The last word: it was great to see Dave Flowitt as the guest pianist knocking out audiences all through the Toronto International Jazz Festival. We've always known that Dave was a world-class pianist in his stride/Morton renditions, but it was good to see that recognized by the visiting musicians. Congratulations, Dave, from one of your greatest admirers!

Jack Hutton

AUTOMOBILE

Characteristic March - Two Step.

by ROSE DE HAVEN

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AUTOMOBILE TWOSTEP

By

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